



# WORK LIFE BALANCE

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## ABSTRACT

The main focus of this paper is on disturbing work life balance in India and measures taken to improve this imbalance. Nowadays everyone is running after money, which can be earned thorough working. Money making has become an important aspect of life but at what cost? Employees and employers forgets that spending long working hours can also affect their personal lives too. They should learn how to balance both work and lifestyles to lead a successful and healthy life. Some companies like TCS, Google and Colgate are taking initiative for achieving this balance like child care facilities, flexible shifts, crèche facilities etc.

**KEY WORDS:** Work Life, Absenteeism, stress, working mothers.

### Introduction

Leading a successful and peaceful life is everyone's dream. For attaining this working is important both on the part of men and women too. Also, earning well helps the economy manifold as it fosters the economy growth by increasing per capita income and ultimately gives rise to GDP. It shows that a nation is performing well. But reality is something else. Is money everything? Recent research shows that more than 60% of employees cannot balance their personal and professional life, which ultimately leads to stress a work, lack of concentration. All these factors ultimately lead to high labor turnover rate in industry.

Work life balance means making a balanced choice between the work which includes career, ambitions, aims, and life which includes health, pleasure, leisure and family.

Work = f(Career, ambitions)

Life = f(Health, pleasure, leisure, Family)

How to equalize these two equations i.e. how to make a proper balance between work and life.

It is true that there is no substitute for hard work, especially for the Indian professionals who are beginning to make a mark in the global business world. But, striking a balance between work and personal life is equally imperative. After all, one cannot be expected to make a living at the expense the quality of life that all humans deserve.

### Importance of Work Life Balance

As per Psychologists and trainers, human beings are forced by many drives. But working drive is most important as it fulfills the self recognition and self esteem needs of individuals. One thing should be clearly understood that, these needs are not important that's one's life. Now people are more connected to each other with the help of technology, social media etc. so it becomes very difficult for people to separate work and personal life.

Nowadays, work life balance is a key player in how employers are attracting top performing employees in the organizations. Now salaries are not the sole criteria which a person is looking for when they were offered a job. Now employees are also doing an extensive research on the culture and working of the organizations by taking all sort of information from present and past employees. So now it becomes very essential for organizations to create an environment that fosters the work life balance of employees.

In today's scenario of light labor market, work life balance practices are very important for employee retention. Otherwise employees keep on shifting their jobs from one company to another in search of better facilities and less stressed job structure.

At an early age in life, when a person is just initiating ones career, his energy is at maximum level and he is more enthusiastic towards working. But as he gets older that zeal to work starts deteriorating and as a result it leads to emptiness, darkness in one's life which ultimately leads to depression.

As per psychologists, middle aged group employees have suffered from it a lot. They believe that They have left lesser time to achieve greater things in life so

they over burden themselves with work to get all that and hence their work life balance gets disturbed. This balance is very essential for attaining professional success as it helps in gaining the confidence and it boosts the morale and motivation level of employees, which ultimately holds the organization as well.

### Women employees

Women employees are the worst sufferers of work life imbalance. Government, NGO's, society at large is focusing on girls education. If a girl is educated, a family is educated. Yes, it's true but we forget one thing that an educated girl also needs parity. She also wants equal chance of work as men are getting.

But social norms and customs and traditions don't let them do things their way. Time is changing rapidly, but it has increased the responsibilities of women too now they have to look out for their household as well as official responsibilities. Some are able to manage things well but it is very difficult for them to maintain the work life balance.

As per Maternity Benefit Act, 1961, all pregnant women must get three months paid maternity leaves, but in reality it is very difficult for them to come after leaving their three month old child behind. It gives them a feeling of guilt to leave their child with grand parents or maids when the child needed them the most. This all mental pressure ultimately forces them to leave the job. After the break when they again come back to their professional life, then they left behind their colleagues, which also give them a sense of low confidence level.

### Senior Employees

Senior Employees are the worst sufferers of this imbalance. They face maximum work related pressure. In a research done by Associated Chambers of Commerce and industry of India, it was seen that most of the senior employees are complaining high workloads, tensions and long working hours.

### Literature Review

The term work life balance was first time used in UK in late 1970's to explain the individual work and personal life balance. In US, this term was used in 1986.

As Bowswell and Olson-Buchanan describes "increasingly sophisticated and affordable technologies have made it more feasible for employees to keep contact with work".

Work Life Balance Defined, Bird, JimTheOfficer; Jun 2004; 80, 5; ProQuest Research Library.

In this article author explains that work life balance does not means an equal balance. It is different for everyone i.e. it is different for different people. It gives two main concepts for the effective work life balance i.e. daily achievement and enjoyment.

Impact of work life balance on performance of employees in the organization by prakash Vir Khari and Jyothi Bhel

This paper states that organizational culture and practices at workplaces affects work life and put organizations desires in front of the individual needs.

### Strachan & Burgess (1988)

This paper pointed out issues like work flexibility from employers' point of view

and it gives employees a choice in managing their work properly.

### Pocock (2003)

This paper describes the lack of balance between the changing nature of the families and the workplace cultures as a collision between work and families. Institutions do not recognize its effect on workplaces and fails to manage the balance with the employee's expectations which spread beyond their working life.

### Advantages of work Life Balance

The advantages of maintaining proper work life balance is manifold. It helps in achievement of organizational as well as personal goals.

Some of the advantages at organizational level are:

It helps in increasing the productivity level of workers as there is a saying that "Happy employees are more Productive". It gives them a sense of job satisfaction which ultimately leads to improved performance level and higher commitment powers also.

Better work life balance leads to better team work in the organization. People work in harmony with each other. Chances of organizational conflicts and fights reduce. It ultimately improves the organizational climate and work culture.

It also improves the motivation and satisfaction level of employees and this ultimately leads to better communication process in the organization.

Some of the advantages at individual levels are:

Proper work life balance reduces the work related stress among the employees. This leads to healthy, happy and improved life of employees. It gives more value and balancing life to the employees. It develops healthy relationship amongst employers and employees. As there are proper channel of communication so there are lesser chances of organizational disputes. As the work life balance improves, employees feel more associated and committed to the organization, as a result the labor turnover rate also goes down.

### Work Life Imbalance

Work life imbalance means inability to manage personal and professional life properly. There are several in built factors which lead to work life imbalance. For example social support, organizational factors, individual factors, stress factors etc. such as if a person is less participative in family or if person is having limited friendships. Distance in personal relations also leads to work life imbalance. Work life imbalance leads to following problems:

### Obesity

Improper work life balance and bad or improper eating habits leads to obesity because employees generally have no time to exercise or to take short breaks during office hours. This ultimately leads to wrong sitting postures, over eating and with no physical workout it ultimately leads to obesity, which is a very common problem nowadays.

### Exhaustion

Due to Odd Shifts and odd working Hours people are sacrificing their night sleep. As a result sleeping disorders creeps in which leads to negative impact on personal health of the employees.

### Absenteeism

Due to health problem, employees usually absents themselves from the work place which ultimately costs both to the employers in the form of increased medical leave and to the employees in the form of increased medical bills and decline in productivity as well.

### Burnout

It means lack of interest, emotions, motivation and depression amongst the workers. These all are caused due to work life imbalance.

### Stress

Work life imbalance has major impact on the stress level of employees. This increased stress therefore leads to heart diseases like cardiovascular disease. It also leads to depression, back aches, migraines, over emotion, sexual problems etc.

### Policies and Conclusion

There are several measures that companies can take to improve the work life balance. Several companies have taken initiative in this aspect. Such as Walt Disney is known for their focus on training and team building techniques. Also google is famous for offering flexible schedules so that employees can learn to manage their time accordingly. As TCS has taken initiative to improve work lives balance through "Mindtree", a platform that is provided to engage the employees in different activities. Different club facilities are also offered by TCS to its employees like theatre club, music club, adventure club etc.

The recommended measures to improve the work life balance are:

By ensuring that there is adequate vacation coverage one can ensure a better work life balance. For example company can cross train their employees or they can ensure that when one employee is on vacation his work won't get disrupt

because there is proper mechanism of managing his work accordingly.

By offering employee friendly working time flexibility so can they can report to office as per their convenient timings. This mechanism can ensure better work life balance as working parents can manage their timings and arrange accordingly for the pick up and dropping of their kids on time. Also they can take their parents to visit doctors for the health check up. It gives them greater flexibility. But it has both positive and negative impact on workers because although it gives time to workers to manage their affairs but working at odd hours or at odd shifts also have negative impact on their health too.

By ensuring that work is evenly distributed across the department according to the working capacity, so that no department is overburdened due to heavy workload pressure.

By offering plans to new mothers and fathers to work part time or to work from home facility during the child's pre school years. In this way new parents will be having time to spent with their kids.

By offering facilities like gym, and dry cleaning facility and crèche facilities which makes the life of the employees much easier. They can carry their kids along with them to office and enjoy the benefits of crèche facility.

By offering health insurance also employers can help in improving the work life balance. Also, health insurance helps the employees to reduce the stress levels. It gives a sense of belonging to employees

Companies can also make arrangements for specialized training programs or development programs. they can also make arrangement for seminars and conferences which help employees to gain necessary skills to improve their performance.

Maintaining a proper work life balance is very pertinent for the smooth functioning of the organization. Employees productivity can increase manifold by attaining this balance. Also it gives personal satisfaction to employees due to improved relationship with family and friends.

The government should also intervene and make the policy changes from time to time. As india is a multi religious and multi cultural country there can not be a single policy that's fits all, so Indian companies have to adopt the policies accordingly as per the requirements of the people working therein.

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